

Well, we've had a fire, a flood, a blizzard—[laughter]—I guess we can take a—[ap-
plause].

So anyway, we'll have our folks here, and there will be lots of them. And let me just say, this is going to be—these next few days—our FEMA Director, James Lee Witt, and I have been working on these things a long time. He was my emergency director when I was Governor of Arkansas. I know what's going to happen. I've been through floods and tornadoes and terrible losses. The next few days are going to be very, very hard on a lot of people. A lot of you who have been very, very brave and courageous, helped your friends and neighbors, are going to—it's going to sink in on you what you have been through and what has been lost. And I want to encourage all of you to really look out for each other in the next few days and be sensitive to the enormous emotional pressures that some of you will feel and also kind of be good to yourselves. Understand you don't have to be ashamed if you're heartbroken. But it's going to be tough in the next few days.

But I also want you to feel very resolute about the long run. I have asked Director Witt to head an interagency task force to develop a long-term plan for what our responsibilities are to help you rebuild and be stronger and better than ever. And believe me, it may be hard to believe now, but you can rebuild stronger and better than ever. And we're going to help you do that. And we want you to keep your eyes on that future.

Let me also say, as I go back to Washington to ask the Congress to approve this emergency package, I will never forget what I have seen and heard here. Four of your community leaders who played various roles in the last several weeks, Ken Vein, Jim Shothorse, Randy Johnson, and Curt Kruen, talked to me and to others in the meeting a few moments ago. I have seen the pictures of people battling the flames of the fire in the rising floods. I have seen rescue workers working around the clock even as they lost their own homes. I have seen people pitching in to rescue books from the University of North Dakota library. I have read the last 3 days editions of this newspaper. How in the world they kept producing the newspaper

for you is beyond me. And you ought to be very proud of them for doing that. I read this morning that there's a message board right here that's covered with offers for free housing all around. And that's the kind of spirit that will get everyone through this.

With all the losses, I hope when this is bearing down on you in the next few days, you will remember the enormous courage and shared pride and values and support that all of you have given each other. You have shown that when we think of our duties to one another, our own lives are better, that we're all stronger when we try to make sure our friends and neighbors are safe and strong as well. And no matter what you have lost in this terrible flood, what you have saved and strengthened and sharpened and shown to the world is infinitely better. And you should be very, very proud of that.

I saw something your mayor said the other day that struck me in particular. She said, "What makes a community a place to live in is not the buildings. It's the people, the spirit, and faith that are in those people. Water cannot wash that away, and fire cannot burn that away, and a blizzard cannot freeze that away." And if you don't give it away, it will bring you back better than ever. And we'll be there with you every step of the way.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:50 p.m. in Hangar Two at Grand Forks Air Force Base. In his remarks, he referred to Brig. Gen. Kenneth Hess, USAF, Base Commander, Grand Forks Air Force Base.

Statement on Investment Sanctions Against Burma

April 22, 1997

Today I am announcing my decision to impose a ban on new U.S. investment in Burma.

I have taken this step in response to a constant and continuing pattern of severe repression by the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) in Burma. During the past 7 months, the SLORC has arrested and detained large numbers of students and opposition supporters, sentenced dozens to long-term imprisonment, and prevented the expression of political views by the demo-

cratic opposition, including Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy (NLD).

I have therefore imposed sanctions under the terms of the "Cohen-Feinstein" Amendment, a bipartisan measure that I fully support. As contained in the Burma policy provision of the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 1997 (Public Law 104-208), this amendment calls for investment sanctions if the Government of Burma has physically harmed, rearrested for political acts, or exiled Aung San Suu Kyi, or has committed large-scale repression of, or violence against, the democratic opposition. It is my judgment that recent actions by the regime in Rangoon constitute such repression.

Beyond its pattern of repressive human rights practices, the Burmese authorities also have committed serious abuses in their recent military campaign against Burma's Karen minority, forcibly conscripting civilians and compelling thousands to flee into Thailand. The SLORC regime has overturned the Burmese people's democratically elected leadership. Under this brutal military regime, Burma remains the world's leading producer of opium and heroin, and tolerates drug trafficking and traffickers in defiance of the views of the international community. The regime has shown little political will to stop the narcotics exports from Burma and prevent illicit drug money from enriching those who would flaunt international rules and profit by destroying the lives of millions.

The United States and other members of the international community have firmly and repeatedly taken steps to encourage democratization and human rights in Burma. Through our action today, we seek to keep faith with the people of Burma, who made clear their support for human rights and democracy in 1990 elections which the regime chose to disregard. We join with many others in the international community calling for reform in Burma, and we emphasize that the U.S.-Burma relationship will improve only as there is progress on democratization and respect for human rights.

In particular, we once again urge the authorities in Burma to lift restrictions on Aung San Suu Kyi and the political opposition, respect the rights of free expression, assembly,

and association, and undertake a dialog on Burma's political future that includes leaders of the NLD and the ethnic minorities.

Proclamation 6995—Law Day, U.S.A., 1997

April 22, 1997

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

This is the 40th year that Americans have celebrated the first day of May as Law Day, a special time to reflect on our legal heritage. It is an opportunity for all Americans to pause and consider how the rule of law has contributed to the freedoms we enjoy, and to our greatness as a Nation.

The theme of this year's Law Day commemoration, "Celebrate Your Freedom," focuses on the one concept that most defines us as a Nation. It was freedom that we fought for when we created this country. It is freedom that still sets us apart from many of the world's nations. And it is freedom's lamp that still beckons the oppressed to America from all parts of the globe.

The quest to ensure our freedom is the essence of what it means to be an American, and the bulwark of our freedom is the law and the legal system. James Madison once observed that if men were angels, governments would not be necessary. Laws are the instruments by which the people, through their government, protect themselves from, and regulate their relations with, each other. At the same time, laws also serve to restrain the power of that government. Finding the proper balance between the conflicting interests and rights of individuals, corporations, and government has never been easy. But we rely on the rule of law itself to protect all that is most precious to us. Without it, other nations have descended into a state where force alone prevails and justice is a mere hope.

Thanks to the genius of our Founders and the Constitutional system they created, Americans have witnessed the steady march of progress toward an open, inclusive society. We vote in free, fair elections. We worship according to our own faith. We associate